



## WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

June 12, 2009

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Please route to all interested parties in your township.

### **STATE BUDGET CUTS PROCEEDING**

The Michigan Legislature is beginning to apply additional cuts to the state budget for fiscal year 2010, despite having no target agreement in place between Republicans in the Senate and Democrats in the House. The Senate is moving ahead with overall cuts that amount to an additional 15% (exceeding \$1.2 billion) compared to the Governor's budget recommendations made in February. State revenue collections have fallen significantly short of expectations in many categories since early in the year and are necessitating further cuts. The governor recently announced that her budget, as originally presented to the Legislature would have to be reduced by another 8%.

The Senate hit the 2010 agriculture budget especially hard this week by reducing it by \$18.4 million. The current year agriculture budget is \$104.8 million. The cuts are drawing criticism related to reductions in the state's surplus food program, which takes excess crops from the field and distributes them to needy families, and cuts to the migrant housing inspection program. The Senate also reduced the transportation budget for next year by \$23.5 million, by cutting \$4.3 million in bus operating funds, \$3 million from the bus capital fund and \$2 million in Amtrak subsidies. Neither the Senate nor House this week tackled the 2010 general government budget, which contains revenue sharing funds. The Senate, however, is expected to address it on Tuesday. MTA is working to determine the different proposals in the House and Senate related to revenue sharing. We will be reporting this information to township officials as soon as it is known.

Efforts are underway to try and restore pending layoffs of 104 state troopers in the current fiscal year. This effort seems to have the support of both House and Senate leaders. The Senate was expected to act on SB 253 on the floor to restore the trooper funding but adjourned before taking it up.

### **STATE WORKER FURLOUGH DAYS**

One part of the state budget cuts that were approved in early May, through Executive Order 2009-22, for the current fiscal year require state workers from most departments to take six furlough days before Sept. 30, 2009. The unpaid furlough days will impact roughly 38,000 of the state's 53,000 state employees and save \$21.7 million for the State of Michigan. Where administratively feasible, furlough days will be applied uniformly across state government on the following days: Friday, June 19; Monday, July 6; Friday, July 24; Friday, August 7; Friday, August 21; and Friday, September 4. On these dates, most non-emergency functions in state offices will shutdown.

### **GRASS MOWING ALONG STATE HIGHWAYS BEING REDUCED**

The MI Department of Transportation (MDOT) is cutting back significantly on its summer maintenance activities. MDOT officials have advised legislators and associations, including MTA, that due to state budget constraints "non-critical maintenance activities will be significantly curtailed this summer." These include: mowing, litter pick-up, sweeping, brush clearing, and many surface activities. MDOT also added that grass mowing along or within the median of state highways will be trimmed to one cut per summer. MDOT officials are trying to have all of the grass mowing completed around July 4<sup>th</sup>. Township officials who might have thoughts of cutting the grass along state highways on their own are asked to contact their county road commission. MDOT officials, however, want to remind everyone that they will continue to perform essential services to protect the health and safety of Michigan residents, including operation of freeway lighting, traffic signals, moveable bridges, critical surface repairs and patching potholes.

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